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Paper No. 7

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JUL 28 2003

In re Application of
Caprio
Application No. 10/068,194
Filed: February 5, 2002
Attorney Docket No. 31287-36223
FOR: NURSING GARMENT AND SUPPORT
BRA

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

DECISION DISMISSING
PETITION

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a), filed February 24, 2003, to revive the above-identified application.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) is **DISMISSED**.

Any further petition to revive the above-identified application must be submitted within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Petition under 37 CFR 1.137." This is **not** final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 704.

The above-identified application became abandoned for failure to timely reply to the Notice to File Corrected Application Papers, mailed February 28, 2002, which set a period for reply of two (2) months. No timely reply was filed. Thus, this application became abandoned on April 29, 2002. The filing of the instant petition precedes the mailing of A Notice of Abandonment.

Petitioner alleges that he did not receive the February 28, 2002 Notice.

A grantable petition to revive an abandoned application under 37 CFR 1.137(a) must be accompanied by (1) the required reply, unless previously filed. In a nonprovisional application abandoned for failure to prosecute, the required reply may be met by the filing of a continuing application. In an application or patent, abandoned or lapsed for failure to pay the issue fee or any portion thereof, the required reply must be the payment of the issue fee or any outstanding balance thereof; (2) the petition fee as set forth in § 1.17(l); (3) a showing to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to this paragraph was unavoidable; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in § 1.20 (d)) required pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section. This petition does not satisfy requirement (3).

With respect to (3), the showing of record is inadequate to establish unavoidable delay within the meaning of 37 CFR 1.137(a). Specifically, an application is "unavoidably" abandoned only where petitioner, or counsel for petitioner, takes all action necessary for a proper response to the

outstanding Office action, but through the intervention of unforeseen circumstances, such as failure of mail, telegraph, telefacsimile, or the negligence of otherwise reliable employees, the response is not timely received in the Office. Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31 (Comm'r Pat. 1887).

The Commissioner may revive an abandoned application if the delay in responding to the relevant outstanding Office requirement is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been "unavoidable". 35 USC § 133. Decisions on reviving abandoned applications have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable. Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (Comm'r Pat. 1887)(the term 'unavoidable' "is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business"); In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (D.C. Cir. 1912); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (Comm'r Pat. 1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a "case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account." Smith v. Mossinghoff, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition to revive an application as unavoidably abandoned cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing the cause of the unavoidable delay. Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 5 USPQ2d 1130 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include :

1. A statement from the practitioner stating that the Office communication was not received by the practitioner and attesting to the fact that a search of the file jacket and docket records indicates that the Office communication was not received.
2. A copy of the docket record where the non-received Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed must be attached to and referenced in practitioner's statement.

A review of the record indicates no irregularity in the mailing of the February 28, 2002 Notice, and in the absence of any irregularity there is a strong presumption that the communication was properly mailed to the applicant at the correspondence address of record. This presumption may be overcome by a showing that the aforementioned communication was not in fact received.

Petitioner has not proven nonreceipt because (1) practitioner did not include a statement that a thorough search of the file jacket and docket records was conducted and (2) practitioner did not include a copy of the docket record where the non-received Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed. Since the docket record was not included, obviously practitioner did not satisfy the "reference the docket record in his statement" requirement.

ALTERNATIVE VENUE

If petitioner is unable to provide persuasive documentary evidence of unavoidable delay, petitioner may wish to consider filing a petition stating that the delay was unintentional. Public Law 97-247, § 3, 96 Stat. 317 (1982), which revised patent and trademark fees, amended

35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) to provide for the revival of an “unintentionally” abandoned application without a showing that the delay in prosecution or in late payment of an issue fee was “unavoidable.” This amendment to 35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) has been implemented in 37 CFR 1.137(b).

The filing of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) cannot be intentionally delayed and therefore must be filed promptly. A person seeking revival due to unintentional delay can not make a statement that the delay was unintentional unless the entire delay, including the delay from the date it was discovered that the application was abandoned until the filing of the petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(b), was unintentional. A statement that the delay was unintentional is not appropriate if petitioners intentionally delayed the filing of a petition for revival under 37 CFR 1.137(b). The current 137(b) fee for a small entity is \$650. The applicable forms are enclosed for petitioner’s convenience.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop PETITION
Commissioner for Patents
Post Office Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By facsimile: (703) 308-6916
Attn: Office of Petitions

By hand: Office of Petitions
2201 South Clark Place
Crystal Plaza 4, Suite 3C23
Arlington, VA 22202

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (703) 308-6712.



E. Shirene Willis
Senior Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions

Enclosures: blank PTO/SB/64-- PETITION FOR REVIVAL OF AN APPLICATION
ABANDONED UNINTENTIONALLY UNDER 37 CFR 1.137(b)

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